

## Stagebridge Actors featured in National Stories

Imagine seeing an image of yourself seven stories high on the NASDAQ jumbotron screen on Times Square. Or opening up



the most widely circulated magazine in the world and looking at a picture of yourself. Fantasy? Perhaps. But, for storyteller Jeff Byers and actress Joanne Grimm, it is a reality.

Byers is featured in a video and photo exhibit that debuted last week in Times Square before it takes off for a tour around the country. The exhibit is "Beautiful Minds: Creativity and Aging" that is sponsored by the Martek Corporation (a biotech company) and the National Center for Creative Aging. Jeff is one of ten profiles of older adults who are doing extraordinary things in their retirement. You can see the video with Jeff by clicking here. Since joining Stagebridge three years ago as a storyteller, Jeff has expanded his talents by acting for the first time in *Chicken Sunday*, performing with the Antic Witties improv troupe, sharing stories with children in the Storybridge program and leading storytelling groups at Satellite Housing, Inc.! Whewww!



Longtime company member Joanne Grimm was just flown to New York City for a photo shoot for the AARP magazine. Joanne is one of just seven profiles that the magazine is spotlighting in a feature "Budding Geniuses" looking at people over 70 who are doing amazing creative and artistic things. Joanne joined Stagebridge as a storyteller after a career in education. She quickly took to performing in

many Grandparent Tales plays; has served as the hostess of *Never Too Late*, where she is known for her biting humor; and also enjoys sharing her stories with the student nurses training programs and serves on Stagebridge's Board of Trustees. See Joanne's picture and story in the September issue.

Maryann Maslan, Marketing Director

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## STORYTELLING IN REVIEW

As spring winds down at Stagebridge and our year comes to an end, I look back in a daze and in awe of my first year at the nation's oldest senior theater company. I am amazed at how many programs, activities, events, classes and opportunities that Stagebridge, its staff, contract workers, volunteers and community partners manage to squeeze in to a few short months.



From the fall of 2009 to the current spring semester, here are the highlights of storytelling at Stagebridge:

- Along with the storytelling director, five Stagebridge students got to strut their stuff and perform at the Julia Morgan Theater with the *Tell It On Tuesday Solo Performance* and Storytelling production.

- Stagebridge hosted three showcases at The Ashby Stage in Berkeley (fall, winter, spring), where our students performed to full houses, for the public and demonstrated some of the skills and techniques that they learned throughout the semester.

- Stagebridge was proud to present its 19<sup>th</sup> annual *Grandparent's Tales Contest*. Over 200 children submitted written stories and illustrations about their grandparents. The winners read their entries at Barnes & Noble, and several lucky children read their stories on *Wee Poets Cable 26*, children's television program.

- For the first time Stagebridge hosted a workshop by internationally acclaimed, San Francisco based, performing artists Eth-Noh-Tec.

- Another first happened when Stagebridge partnered with the Bay Area Storytelling Festival and hosted "one of Europe's most influential storytellers," Ben Haggarty from the United Kingdom. Haggarty performed a two-hour rendition of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

- La Pena Cultural Center partnered with Stagebridge to bring international Chilean performer, Osvaldo Torres, storyteller, musician, singer and writer to our company for a workshop and lively exchange.

- Some of the continuing programs that we offered throughout the year were our beginning and advanced storytelling classes for seniors, Civil Rights programs for middle and high schools, *Respond, Reflect, Respect* Storytelling Assemblies for elementary schools, after-school programs, and residencies. We also offered *TimeSlips* and *Storybridge*, which are separate grant-funded storytelling programs which ran successfully all year long.

If that was my first year at Stagebridge, I can't wait until next year! See you at summer camp!

Kirk Waller, Director of Storytelling Programs

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